

ROTOVUE

Serving Marine Corps Air Station New River and Jacksonville, N.C.

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Marines are killing themselves with supplements....Pg. 5



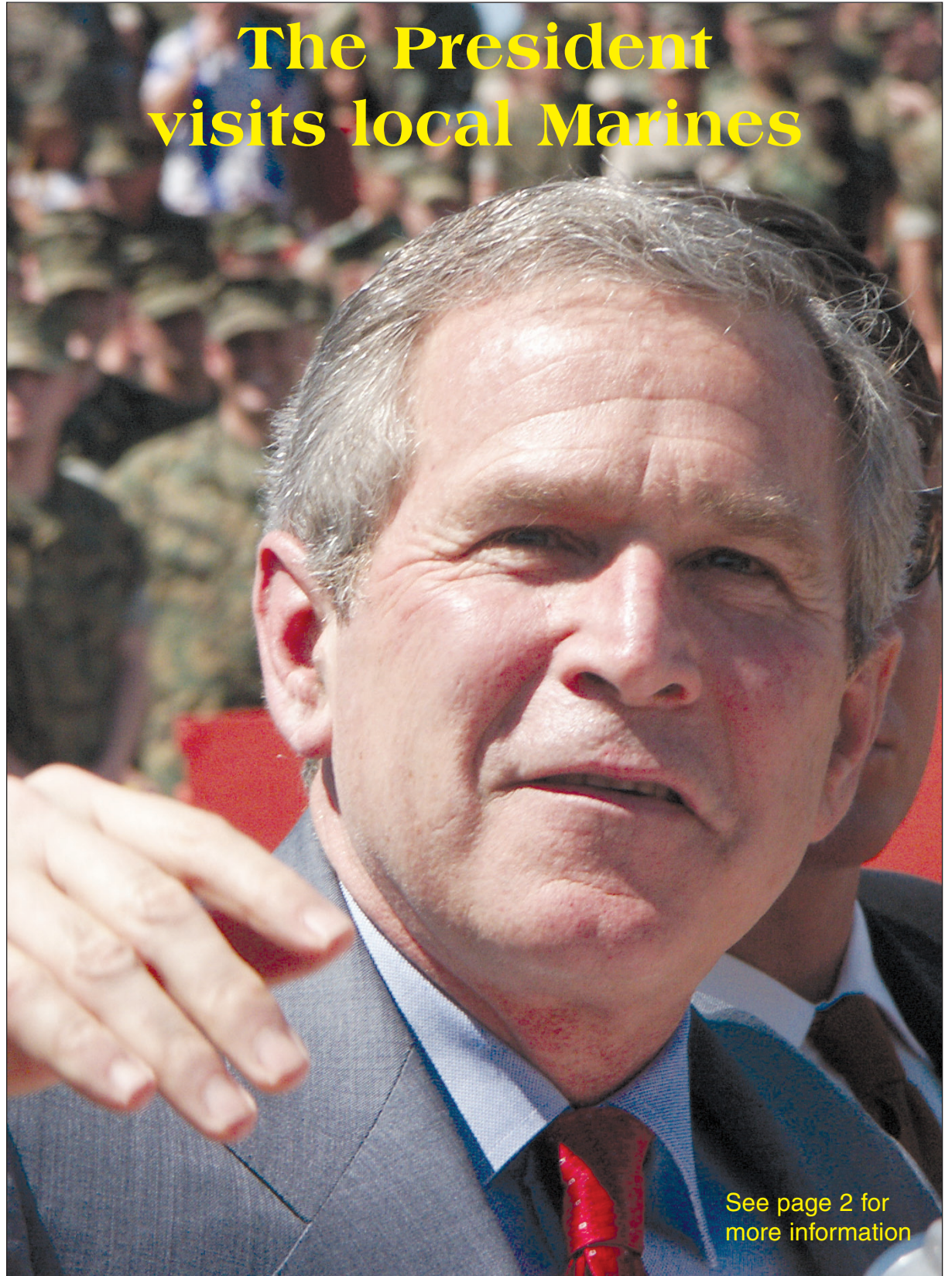
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**The President
visits local Marines**



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more information

FLIGHTLINES

OWC Open Mic Night

The New River Officers' Wives' Club will host an Open Mic Night April 25 at 7 p.m. at the Officers' Club. Admission is \$3 and includes appetizers. Five prizes totaling \$250 in local area gift certificates will be awarded for various categories. Open Mic Night is not limited to singing, jokes or impersonations are welcome. Come out for a night of fun and entertainment.

Month of the Military Child Coloring Contest

The Personal Services Center is having a coloring contest open to all MCAS New River family members ages 5 - 18. Drawings must be free hand and submitted on 8" x 11" paper. All mediums may be used, except computer generated and enhanced artwork or photography. Include full name, address and phone number on the back of the entry.

The contest is limited to one entry per person and must be received by 4 p.m. at the Personal Service Center by close of business on April 15. Winners will be telephoned and prizes will be presented on April 23 at the Family Team Building Center, AS-242.

Children 5 and 6 may pick up an official entry picture to color and submit. Artwork will not be returned.

For more info, call Marilyn F. Nakamura at 449-5259.

Vietnam Vets Recognition Day

April 30 is the twenty-eighth anniversary of the end

of the Vietnam War. A ceremony will be held for Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day at the Aviation Memorial at 10 a.m. Retired Marine Corps colonel Wayne E. Morris will be the guest speaker for the event. Because of this event **the main gate will be closed at 9:45 for both in coming and out going traffic.**

USMC Motor Transport Association 7th Reunion

The event is scheduled for September 14 - 17 in Niagara Falls, N.Y. For more information contact Hal Clapp by phone at 346-8797 or by e-mail at usmcmta@vol.com.

For membership information contact Terry Hightower at (541) 430-3855 or via e-mail at: usmc_mta_membership@marinecorps.com.

DOD Tests Space-A Travel Privileges for Families

The Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Transportation Policy) has approved a one-year test to evaluate the expansion of space-available privileges for family members traveling within the Continental United States (CONUS). The test allows family members of active duty and retired Uniformed Services members to travel within the CONUS when accompanied by their sponsors. The test will end April 1, 2004.

Family members assume the same category of travel as their sponsor.

Active duty Uniformed

Services members must be in a leave or pass status to register for space-available travel, remain in a leave or pass status while awaiting travel, and be in a leave or pass status the entire period of travel.

For additional information concerning space-available travel and sign-up procedures please review the Air Mobility Command public Web site at <http://amcpubpublic.scott.af.mil/SpaceA/SpaceA.htm> or contact the servicing Department of Defense air terminal of interest.

New River Emergency 911 Procedures

The New River Provost Marshal's Office would like to remind the New River community to dial 911 for all emergency calls for police, fire or ambulance services. Dialing 911 allows all New River emergency responders (military police, firefighters and paramedics) to be dispatched in the most timely manner. Please continue to call the Provost Marshal's Office desk sergeant at 449-6111 for all non-emergency requests for military police services.

Free Martial Arts Training

All people associated with the military are invited to participate in free martial arts courses designed around Aikido and Iaijutsu, being taught by Maj. Roger Mead from Marine Aircraft Group-26.

The classes are open to people over the age of 12 and are held at the Field House (building 39) aboard Camp Lejeune on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and

Saturday mornings. Beginners are welcomed, and this is an excellent way to build fitness and confidence.

For more information call 353-6063.

Naval Institute Interactive Site

Annapolis, Md. -- The U.S. Naval Institute has added a new interactive GPS reference to Resource File: Iraq at www.navalinstitute.org. The interactive site offers visitors the opportunity to learn the inner workings of GPS and GPS jamming, as well as fail-safes associated with the system. The site also features interactive references on the Tomahawk cruise missile, the F/A-18 Hornet Strike Fighter, the F-14 Tomcat Interceptor, the carrier battle group, and the USS Kitty Hawk.

CVIC Working Hours

The hours of operation at the Combat Visual Information Center are:

Monday - Thursday:

8 - 11:30 a.m.

1 - 4 p.m.

For more information call 449-5277.

On the Cover

President George W. Bush boosts local Marines' morale during his visit to Camp Lejeune, April 3. In his speech the President made it clear that no outcome to the war would be acceptable except complete victory.

Photo on front page by Gunnery Sgt. Richard Small



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If you have any comments or suggestions you may also contact the public affairs office at (910) 449-6196 or fax (910) 449-6478.

HMM-266 continues tradition under new reign

Sgt. Christine C. Odom
correspondent

Warm breezes blew across the flightline as Marines formed up for the Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-266 change of command ceremony March 25.

Many were in attendance as Lt. Col. Richard B. Preble relinquished command of the "Fighting Griffins" to Lt. Col. Joel R. Powers, formerly the squadron's executive officer.

The long history Preble and the Griffins share began in 1986 when he served his first tour with the squadron. He would then receive orders to other installations, but always found his way back to New River and to HMM-266.

"It has been a privilege for me to lead these Marines," said Preble. "They never stopped impressing me, and they, by far, have been the finest bunch of Marines and Sailors I have had the pleasure to work with."

Preble, a native of Milan, Ind., will continue his Marine Corps career as the commanding officer of Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron-204.

"I hate to see him go because I've learned a lot from him," said Powers. "He's a great leader who shows a genuine interest in his troops, and I have some big shoes to fill."

On his most recent return to the squadron in July

2000, Preble reported for duty as the executive officer. Four months later and for the first time, he took command of the "Fighting Griffins".

"He has been with 266 since he was a lieutenant," said Sgt. Maj. Pedro Malu, HMM-266 sergeant major. "He knows the job, the Marines and his squadron, and unlike any other CO, he's been like a brother to me."

The relationship that Preble and Malu share is one of camaraderie, respect and trust. This bond is what Preble felt for all his Marines, and he said he's certain the squadron will continue this same connection with Powers.

During Preble's command, he coordinated with Naval Air Systems Command at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., to have HMM-266 do the validation verifications on the new Engine Condition Control System for the CH-46E Sea Knight helicopters.

This is a significant achievement for the Griffins. They are the first helicopter squadron in the



Cpl. Joe Elickson

Commanding officer of HMM-266, Lt. Col. Richard B. Preble relinquishes command to Lt. Col. Joel R. Powers March 25.

Fleet Marine Force to have all its aircraft outfitted with the new system.

According to Preble, it would be safer for squadrons to deploy with these aircraft, so they can better support the mission. While the mission and having Marines prepared for every circumstance are high priorities to Preble, he also has the strong belief that when Marines go out as a unit, they come back as a unit.

Powers shares this same belief, and he plans to carry on the priorities and traditions that made the Griffins distinguished amongst the other squadrons. The Laurel,

Miss., native has lots of plans for HMM-266 and hopes that he too will leave the squadron better than he found it.

According to Malu, Preble has outgrown his position at the squadron and is ready for bigger and better things.

"It's sad to see Lt. Col. Preble go," said Malu. "He, without a doubt, is the finest CO I have ever served with, however I look forward to new challenges and new accomplishments with Lt. Col. Powers."

New River celebrates women's history

Sgt. Christine C. Odom
correspondent

Women are no longer seen as delicate flowers that are incapable of being independent. Instead, they are known for their strength, determination and their ability to adjust easily to a constantly changing world.

In an effort to recognize some of the contributions women have made to society, New River's Equal Opportunity Committee held a Women's History Luncheon at the Station Officer's Club on March 27.

Attendees were entertained with jokes, songs, poems and a guest speaker with a great deal of attitude. Pastor Edna Cavanaugh of the Believers' Fellowship Church in Jacksonville raised eyebrows and turned heads during her speech about women pioneers for the future.

Cavanaugh, a Jacksonville native, has been inspiring people as a pastor with her profound beliefs and philosophical notions for 26 years and has

yet to show signs of slowing down.

"She says she's not a motivational speaker, but her words are very encouraging," said Cpl. Akil J. Barlow, pay and promotions chief at the administration section of New River's Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron.

"It makes you think, if you don't take a chance, how do you know what you're capable of?" Barlow said.

As part of her speech Cavanaugh quoted Italian author Leo Buscaglia, "a person who risks nothing does nothing; has nothing and is nothing. Risks must be taken because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing."

Without women like Susan B. Anthony, Rosa Parks and Clara Barton, who risked alienation for what they believed in, women would not have gone as far as they have today. It was their refusal to give up and give in that led to the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, which gave women the right to vote, and equality, not just for women, but for every ethnicity.

"The journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step," said Cavanaugh. "Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goals."

Many people face hard times at least once in their life, but according to Cavanaugh, it's how one rises above the situation that defines their character.

Speaking of rising, Staff Sgt. Sabrina M. Bryan, administrative chief at Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-461, recited a poem titled "Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou at the luncheon.

It boldly states how one woman can overcome adversities with the same confidence and sassiness that would not have been acceptable in the past.

The other poem recited was "Phenomenal Woman" also written by Angelou. This particular poem struck a chord with the women in the audience because of its explicit and direct focus of what makes a woman extraor-

dinary.

"Ever since I was little, I had read Maya Angelou, and it made me think that I could be whatever I wanted," said Sgt. Syreeta I. Ortiz, calibrations technician at Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26. "I recited 'Phenomenal Woman' because it exudes that type of 'can do' attitude."

It seems possibilities are endless for anyone who chooses to put forth an effort in accomplishing their goals.

As the luncheon concluded, the audience stood up and gave all the participants in the event a standing ovation for a job well done.

"I was very impressed by the speeches, but I was more impressed by the amount of Marines in leadership billets who attended," said Lt. Col. Timothy W. Fitzgerald, commanding officer of H&HS. "It's very important for them to know all the aspects of their command and attend the observances."

Women pioneers for the future is not just a theme, but a reality.

Tearing down foundations

Building Marines should snowball throughout a Marine's career, not end after boot camp, school

**Master Gunnery Sgt.
Billy D. Stewart**
contributor



There has been much scuttlebutt over the past few years that the new Marines of today just do not pack the gear to carry on the proud traditions of our Corps. However, the

experts at both recruiting regions state something different.

I constantly hear remarks exclaiming that the Corps is recruiting the best educated and qualified applicants to wear the eagle, globe and anchor upon the completion of recruit training.

Still, there seems to be an underlying feeling that young Marines of today are loose, undisciplined and lack drive and dedication.

Why is that? While there are many contributing factors, let me paint a picture for you that may present an interesting analogy.

Put on your winter clothes and take a step back in time to grade school.

It was a cold mid-western day in central Illinois. A smooth white blanket covered the ground as the overcast sky teased of future snow flurries. As always, the young children quickly finished their lunches in the cafeteria and proceeded to the playground for about 45 minutes.

The girls jumped rope, played kickball and took their turns at making "snow angels." Most of the boys, on the other hand, quickly picked sides and began the daily game of touch football. While it usually resulted in much more than a "touch" game, each boy found this as a time of acceptance or rejection based upon their skill level.

There were always a few boys who didn't play sports, and did other things during recess. Some read books, while others watched the

games being played. However, one boy always built things. This particular day, his project was to finish a snowman he had started earlier that week.

He was a great student who tried to excel in all he did. This mission was no different. As the football game progressed, the boy sculpted the snow figure.

His plan was to leave it on the playground for all the students to enjoy and add to. Although, he wasn't interested in football, he knew that his building things for other students made him feel like a part of the team.

As recess neared its end, so did the young boy's snowman. He had spent hours on it. In fact, it was huge and better than anything the other children had ever constructed. All that he needed was some "odds and ends" to finish it.

The hard work had been done. After recess, the boy would rely on his classmates to bring in what was needed to finish the creation tomorrow. This way, the class could take credit for it would become a winter mascot.

As the bell rang out to end recess, the other children went over to the snowman and proceeded to kick, push and knock it down out of meanness, jealousy and spite. Disbelief engulfed the young boy's face. He was confused. This was not what he expected or what his teachers had taught him. His plan was to leave that snowman on the playground for everyone, but instead it lay in pieces doing no one any good. The children knew of his quest, yet they destroyed and ridiculed it. From that day on, the boy ceased to build anything during his recess periods. He went along with the crowd and was never the same.

Young Marines in many ways resemble the snowman that was built and torn down on the playground.

Just as the snowman was built by a dedicated young boy, Marines are also recruited, trained and developed by dedicated Marine recruiters and drill instructors. They leave recruit training much like the snowman ... basically developed. It is after boot camp when the young leathernecks are ready to develop more of the traits, ethics, principles and habits that will complete them as Marines. In the story, the rest of the class was supposed to provide the missing parts to complete the unfinished snowman.

For the Marine, his leaders and peers are responsible to finish off where the recruiters and drill instructors left off. In the same sense, the snowman must have the cold environment to survive and flourish. In the same sense, the young Marine can't flourish in the wrong environment.

Whether we realize it or not, just like the young children, often times we are destroying our Marines by both our inability to foster the correct environment and our lack of providing what he needs to be complete. It all starts the day the Marine hits the "fleet."

As young Marines march across the parade decks of the Marine Corps Recruit Depots, one can see that a transformation has taken place. The snowman has been built. Following a Marine's military occupational specialty school, the fork in the road soon appears and the destruction of the snowman begins.

As they check in, things begin to get confusing for young Marines. They are told in boot camp that all Marines are squared away and professional.

Soon they find out that this is not always true as an overweight Marine picks them up from the unit headquarters building. Many other truths come to light for the young Marines during their first week in the fleet.

Unlike boot camp, Marines soon find out that most Marines are not as squared away and professional as the Marines they were exposed to before and at boot camp. They see that honor, courage and commitment is present at times but not always paramount. Daily, they meet the array of sea lawyers who bad mouth the Marine Corps and tell them to forget all that boot camp stuff that they were fed. Sadly, some of their corporals and sergeants enforce the standards about half of the time and are definitely not what they had expected in a Marine leader.

The Marine's expectations are again crushed as they see a staff noncommissioned officer get into an alcohol related incident while on liberty. After physical training the young Marines ask each other, "how come the officers and SNCOs never lead our runs?"

Finally, while walking to work, the Marines proudly salute a passing officer's vehicle only to get ignored by them.

The foundation, just like the snowman begins its descent to the ground. Like the young boy, soon the Marines give up and join the Corps that they have been exposed to.

Does any of this sound familiar to you? I'm sure there has been some aspect of your expectations and foundation that has been destroyed by the grim reality that you were exposed to early in your career.

However, the bigger question to ponder is, are you adding to a Marine's foundation or destroying it.

Are you following the crowd or preserving tradition? Many Marines ask why the young Marines of today are not living up to the required expectations.

In contrast, we should ask ourselves if we are living up to the young Marines expectations. Let's finish the snowman. Semper Fi.

A body to die for

Cpl. Josh P. Vierela
correspondent

Achieve rapid weight loss with a popular work out supplement. Side effects might include: nausea, vomiting, anxiety, dizziness, headache, irregular heartbeat, heart palpitations, sleep loss and personality changes.

These are just some of the symptoms caused by products containing ephedrine and ephedrine-like components.

Ephedrine works by increasing the body's heart rate producing more heat. This can sometimes cause the body's core temperature to increase and may result in heart attack, stroke, seizures or death, according to Navy Lt. Carmin Kalorin, flight surgeon, Marine Helicopter Training Squadron-302.

The NCAA, Olympics and the NFL have already banned ephedrine. The Army Air Force Exchange Service, Marine Corps Exchange and the Navy Exchange have removed all products containing the substance, and the Naval Aerospace Medical Institute has banned the use of ephedrine products due to the high-risk pilots face while in a cockpit.

The reason for the removal is because ephedrine has been linked to adverse side effects and several deaths, according to Kalorin.

Some of the more notable names with signs of ephedrine use being the cause or a factor in their death include sports athletes who were trying to gain that extra edge.

Rashidi Wheeler, Northwestern University football player, Devaughn Darling, Florida State football player and Steve Bechler, Baltimore Orioles pitcher have all died after using ephedrine.

"Most athletes take it to stay alert and keep active," said Cpl. Kris Giltinan, temporary additional duty clerk, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron. "I took it to give me the motivation and mind set to go to the gym."

However, ephedrine is not selective and doesn't target just athletes. Recently several Marines have died from the use of ephedrine. Tragically their deaths could have been avoided if they knew about the negative side of their workout supplement. Unfortunately the popularity of ephedrine makes some people blind to the problems.

"We have a select population who like to be fit and do everything they can to gain that edge," said Kalorin.

It is because of its popularity that companies keep putting it on the market. Also known as ephedra and ma huang, the substance is often mixed with caffeine for extra energy boosts.



photo illustration by Cpl. Josh P. Vierela

Death comes in many shapes and sizes, and with ephedrine, death comes in many easy to take pills and dietary supplements.

Surprisingly, this substance is still used by many Marines despite its reputation for killing them.

"It is good when you're on duty to keep you awake," said Lance Cpl. Christabel Gutierrez, temporary additional duty clerk, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron. "It (ephedrine products) was the only thing that would keep me awake."

However, this combination increases the potential for adverse affects.

So, why doesn't the Food and Drug Association regulate this potentially dangerous substance?

Due to a law known as the Dietary

Supplements Health and Education Act, the FDA is prevented from regulating products of that type. Unlike food and drugs, ephedrine is classified as a dietary supplement, which can be sold without fully proving claims and quality.

It is because of these facts and possible risks that military personnel should stay away from ephedrine products.

"There have been no reputable studies to show ephedra has any performance enhancing effects," said Kalorin. "Putting yourself at risk to lose a little bit of weight isn't worth it. The benefits don't outweigh the risks."



Sgt. Matthew O. Holly

A Marine monument stands in an unlikely spot in Arizona.

Remembering our fallen brothers

Sgt. Matthew O. Holly
correspondent

This past Christmas, while I was taking annual leave, I was driving down a two-lane highway through the Saguaro National Monument, just Northwest of Tucson, Ariz., when looking up over the dashboard, I noticed some lights in the distance that stood out among everything else in that area. Now being knowledgeable of the area, I knew about the airport that stood in the vicinity; however, these lights were not those of any airport that I knew of.

As I approached the luminous formation, a Marine

Corps flag caught my eye, as it always does. I had to ask myself, "What in the world is a Marine Corps flag doing out in the middle of nowhere?" Just then my memory turned its attention back to the spring of 2000. "Of course," I thought to myself. "The Osprey crash near the Marana Airport. Would there be an actual memorial way out here?"

As I thought about it a bit longer, I realized that I wouldn't have expected anything less. Seemingly, Marines are known for paying respect to Marines who have not only fallen, but who have served before them.

Looking beyond the more

famous memorials for Marines, i.e., The Marine Corps War Memorial, a person can visit little known parts of the world and see some sort of monument dedicated to the Marines of the past and their rendered services.

Whether it's the Iwo Jima Survivors Association memorial in Newington, Conn., 1/7 Marines, Korea Memorial, in Cathedral City, Calif., or the many monuments eulogizing Marines in the Belleau, France area, some may find themselves standing in an atmosphere of personnel reflection all the while remembering the warriors who came before them.

For most, being a part of the Marine Corps is more than just fulfilling a four-year contract and moving on to the next chapter of their life. It becomes part of a lifestyle embedded in the way they think, act and function as individuals. It is this mentality that allows us to see tangible memorials in the most obscure parts of the world.

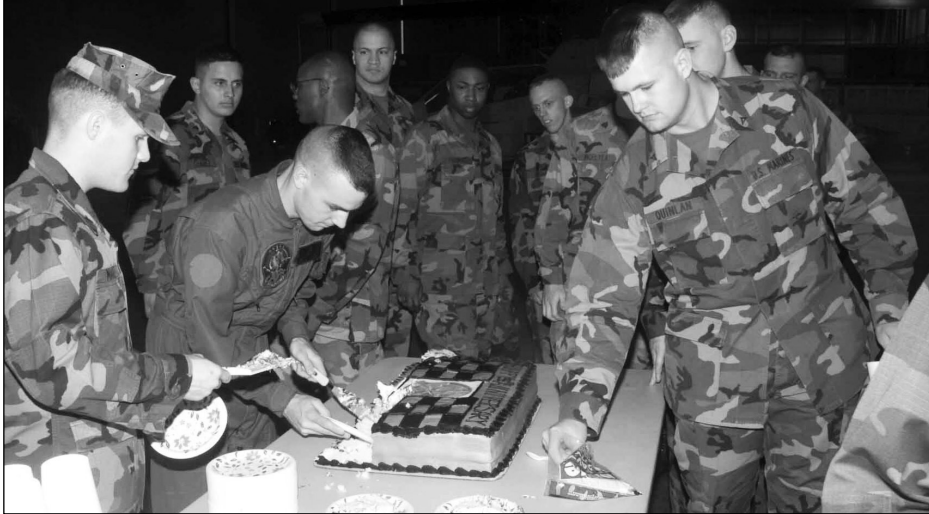
For me, as a Marine, I find it remarkable and awe-inspiring, that Marines, throughout the history of this great organization, are being remembered in places, that if not for the significance it holds for the Marines, would surely be forgotten.



Sgt. Juan Vara

‘Griffins’ make the day

Students from Southwest Elementary School check out a CH-46E Sea Knight helicopter from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-266 as Capt. Mark Z. Makarewicz, a pilot with the squadron, gives them information on the aircraft. The "Fighting Griffins" visited the school March 27, to take part in the school's career day.



Sgt. Juan Vara

‘Warriors’ take the cake

Marines from Marine Light/Attack Helicopter Squadron-167 cut a piece of their 35th anniversary cake, March 28, inside the squadron's hangar. The squadron was commissioned April 1, 1968 in Vietnam and has reached more than 80,835 mishap-free flight hours.

'Eggcellent' food, fun

Sgt. Christine C. Odom
correspondent

Faces lit up with excitement as children of all ages attended this year's Personal Services Youth Spring Extravaganza April 5.

The event entailed a variety of activities to include egg hunts, face painting, moon walks, roller-skating, karate demonstrations and more. Children also had the opportunity to meet with Sparky the rabbit and Chopper the Station mascot.

"This is our first time attending the event, but we're having a good time," said Sgt. Kristi Holecheck, noncommissioned officer-in-charge, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-29. "It's a nice opportunity to bring people together during the deployments."

In a combined effort to improve the quality of life and family readiness, Personal Services and the Youth Community Center have organized this event so families can spend time together and enjoy leisure activities at no cost.

"With it being the month of the military child, our focus is to honor the military child," said Karen Slack, prevention and education coordinator for Personal Services. "This is our

way to say thank you to military families and their children for all they do."

Parents were b-bopping to the sound of rocking oldies music that could be heard blocks away while their children were attracted to the hot dogs, pizza, sandwiches and fried chicken.

"It's great to see smiles on the kids faces," said volunteer Sgt. Michael Kiley, nuclear, biological and chemical specialist, Marine Wing Support Squadron-471. "This is a good opportunity to help out and spend time with the kids. You miss this feeling while living in the barracks."

Kiley was one of many Marines from MWSS-471 who volunteered his Saturday to help set up the activities for the event.

"We hope this continues to be a successful event for the families and the kids to enjoy," said Shantelle Britt, youth personal services director for the Youth Community Center. "This is a prime opportunity for parents to come out with their kids and celebrate the month of the military child."

According to Slack, family is an important part of the Marine Corps, without their support this organization would not be as successful as it is today.



Cpl. Josh P. Vierela

(Above) Alex Elkins, 5-years-old, gets help from his dad, Staff Sgt. Tom Elkins, putting on his gear before stepping into the rink.

During a warm, cloudy day 2-year-old Daniel Torres, dives hand first into a basket of candy held by the Station mascot Chopper, April 5.



Sgt. Christine C. Odom



Cpl. Josh P. Vierela

(Left) Zahra Ryes, 3-years-old, kicks her shoes off and cuts lose as she enjoys a snow cone. The balloon was just one of the free perks children and adults received at the Personal Services Youth Spring Extravaganza April 5.



Cpl. Josh P. Vierela

(Right) Parents moved aside as their children raced each other for position in order to gain access to the most eggs. The egg hunt was separated into three age groups: 2-4-year olds, 5-8-year olds and 9-12-year olds.



Cpl. Josh P. Vierela

Using buckets bags and just their hands children, ages 2-4, rampage across the grass searching for eggs containing coveted chocolate and candy during an egg hunt at the Youth Center, April 5.



Sgt. Christine C. Odom

As kids are grabbing candy out of the basket, Kelsey Olson, 5-years-old, gives Sparky a big hug before taking some candy for herself at the Personal Services Youth Spring Extravaganza, April 5.

Astronaut course provides memorable experience for trio

Leslie Rector
contributor

A trio of flight surgeons aboard New River stands ready to brave the dangers of space shuttle launches and landings in order to help injured astronauts, if NASA re-commences the program in the wake of the Columbia tragedy.

The three have been trained specifically to provide medical assistance to astronauts in case there is a problem during lift-off, or during a landing. Lieutenant Eric E. Netland, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-461 flight surgeon, said he learned about the Space Operations Medical Support Training Course from other flight surgeons who had gone through the four day long class.

"Part of the course is to become familiarized with the space suit in the event that we were participating in a rescue and we needed to get the space

suit off to treat the astronaut," stated Netland. "We toured the facilities and we were right at the launch pad."

According to Netland, he admires NASA's space program and has considered becoming an astronaut even though he is aware of the dangers of manned space flight having met two of Columbia's crew prior to the February 1 tragedy.

Netland said he met astronauts David Brown and Laurel Clark during flight surgery training in Pensacola, Fla.

"They [Brown and Clark] were speaking to the graduating flight surgeon class," he stated. "The purpose was to encourage those interested to go ahead and apply to the astronaut program."

The flight surgeon said he had a few minutes that day to speak with the astronauts.

"I remember asking general questions about the training they were

undergoing," Netland added. "Both astronauts were extremely nice, outgoing people who were willing to give up their time while they were going through rigorous training to come down and speak to our class and mingle between the tables so they were able to talk to everyone."

Lieutenant Tom R. Grant, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron-204 flight surgeon, also met astronauts Brown and Clark and agrees that they were both very nice.

He said he also thinks the space program is an excellent opportunity for physicians to become astronauts, but for now he plans to support the program solely as a doctor.

"You don't get the opportunity in the civilian world to support space operations," said Grant. "It gives us another area of support for the military, another opportunity for training."

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SPACE

from page 12

According to Grant, doctors who go through the Space Operations Medical Support Training Course are specifically there to support the crew of the shuttle and the crew of the shuttle only.

He said in case of an emergency that might include injured bystanders, his primary focus would still remain on treating injured astronauts while others would take care of people in the area around the space shuttle.

The training course included getting familiar with a space shuttle, and toxic chemicals that may pose a danger to people.

"The majority of it is class work and you go through a lot of didactics talking about the equipment and what you have to remove if you actually need to get to them (the astronauts)," stated Grant.

Air Force Lt. Col. Mike Rein works in the Joint Public Affairs Office at Patrick Air Force Base in Cocoa

Beach, Fla., just down the highway from Kennedy Space Center.

According to Rein, trained physicians like the New River team are valued assets to NASA in its care for the astronauts.

"When a shuttle launches, there are several places that it can abort to land," said Rein. "So on launch day you have several people at the launch site and you also have people overseas to ensure we have enough people (to provide medical assistance) for the mission."

One of the possible secondary landing sites within the United States is at MCAS Cherry Point, where according to Netland, a Navy doctor is also available in case of a shuttle emergency.

According to Rein, some of the physicians are placed onboard helicopters during a launch, so if they had to pull them (the astronauts) out of the ocean, they can have immediate medical attention.

"I don't think people realize how much NASA relies on the Department of Defense for support," he said.

Lieutenant Cmdr. Steven T. Knauer, MAG-26 flight surgeon,

understands just what NASA needs from DoD physicians.

He was approximately 100 yards away from space shuttle Atlantis when it landed last October at the Kennedy Space Center.

"It was really exciting seeing the shuttle coming in," said Knauer.

Knauer is the only New River flight surgeon to have had the opportunity to work a shuttle landing, but that opportunity almost got lost in another tragedy.

"I went through the training course and we were actually sitting in the classroom on September 11, so our class was promptly cancelled and we went back to our units," said Knauer.

He later finished the training and was requested to aid at the landing of space shuttle Atlantis.

"I didn't know what to expect," said Knauer.

He then heard the famous double sonic booms that rattle central Florida when a shuttle is close to landing, and everything fell into place.

"For us (physicians) we are really there for contingencies, but it is nice to watch it land as strictly an observer," he added.

Knauer said while he was at Kennedy Space Center, NASA took the opportunity to test the capabilities of its emergency response teams.

"We did a drill using a vehicle to simulate a normal shuttle landing, but with an astronaut who had a problem after the fact," said Knauer. "We flew in on the helo, picked up the patient and then flew him to the hospital. It was neat to see it work."

Like Netland and Grant, Knauer is a fan of the space program and was happy to learn he could participate as a medical professional.

"Twenty years ago I went to the Naval Academy and my whole goal was to become a pilot and then an astronaut," stated Knauer.

But when those goals changed, he learned he could still chase his dream by being a doctor to the astronauts.

Unless NASA resumes space shuttle flights, the trio may no longer have a chance to utilize their training, but all three say they've enjoyed the opportunity.

"Any flight surgeon considering going (through the training course) should do it," added Netland. "It was a great experience!"

MAG-26 makes their name mud

Marines and Sailors from the Marine Aircraft Group-26 Headquarters Squadron jump in a mud pit March 28, following their commanding officer, Lt. Col. Lawrence E. Miccolis. Special guests to the MAG-26 HQ Mud Run were Col. Douglas F. Ashton, MAG-26 commanding officer, and Sgt. Maj. Collin E. Cotterell, MAG-26 sergeant major.



Sgt. Juan Vara

Awards and Promotions

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-261

Promotions

Sgt. B. D. Adams
Sgt. T. D. Brinson
Sgt. P. C. Lyons
Sgt. A. C. Pusey
Sgt. J. A. Reimert
Cpl. D. M. Becker

Cpl. S. B. Clark
Cpl. F. Uribe

Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal

Sgt. B. D. Huffman
Cpl. F. Uribe

Certificate of Commendation

Sgt. D. S. Taylor
Sgt. G. T. Walker
Cpl. D. M. Becker

Cpl. E. S. Rastrelli
Lance Cpl. D. M. LeBlanc

Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron

Promotions

Cpl. M. D. Bailey
Cpl. A. J. Berelsman
Cpl. B. S. Daizmanzur

Cpl. D. P. Frazer
Lance Cpl. Ferguson
Lance Cpl. A. L. Singleton
Lance Cpl. S. A. Zilch
Pfc. A. L. Davis

Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal

Sgt. C. T. Hegg
Cpl. D. L. Graves
Cpl. J. D. Hays

Good Conduct Medal

Cpl. B. S. Diazmanzur
Cpl. J. R. Escobar
Cpl. J. J. Wilson

Certificate of Commendation

Cpl. M. R. Jelks

Letter of Appreciation

Cpl. I. R. Billington
Cpl. D. W. Lowe Jr.

FROM THE FRONT LINE

Iraqi family risks it all to save American POW

Sgt. Joseph R. Chenelly
I MEF correspondent

MARINE COMBAT HEAD-QUARTERS, Iraq - New heroes have surfaced in the rescue of U.S. Army Private First Class Jessica Lynch.

Under the watchful eyes of more than 40 murderous gunmen, the 19-year-old supply clerk laid in Saddam Hussein Hospital suffering from several wounds and broken bones.

As her captors discussed amputating her leg, an Iraqi man leaned to her ear and whispered, "don't worry." Lynch replied with a warm smile.

The man was already working with U.S. Marines to gain the critical information needed to rescue one of the first American prisoners of war in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Just a day earlier, the lawyer from An Nasiryah had walked 10 kilometers to inform American forces he knew where Lynch was being held.

The shocked Marines asked Mohammad to return to the hospital and note certain things. He was tasked with counting the guards and documenting the hospital's layout. Knowing the risk, he agreed to help the young woman he had seen only once.

"I came to the hospital to visit my wife," said the Iraqi man whose wife was a nurse. "I could see much more security than normal."

The man, who, for his protection, will only be identified as Mohammad, asked one of the doctors about the increased security. "He told me there was a woman American soldier there."

Together, the two went to see her. Peering through the room's window, Mohammad saw a sight he claims will stay with him for a life. An Iraqi colonel slapped the soldier who had been captured after a fierce firefight, March 23. First with his palm; then with his backhand.

"My heart stopped," he said in a soft tone. "I knew then I must help her be saved. I decided I must go to tell the Americans."

Just days earlier, Mohammad saw a woman's body dragged through his neighborhood. He said "the animals" were punishing the woman for waving at a coalition helicopter. The brutal demonstration failed to deter him from going to the Marines.

The same day he first saw Lynch, he located a Marine checkpoint. Worried he'd be mistaken for an attacker in civilian clothes, he approached the Marines with his hands high above his head.

"[A Marine sentry] asked, 'what you want?' " Mohammad said. "I want to help you. I want to tell you important information - about Jessica!"

After talking with the Marines, he returned to the hospital to gather information.

"I went to see the security," he said. "I watched where they stood, where they sat, where they ate and when they slept."

While he observed Saddam's henchmen, the notorious regime death squad paid Mohammad's home an unexpected visit. His wife and six-year-old daughter fled to nearby family. Many of his personal belongings, including his car, were seized.

"I am not worried for myself," he said. "Security in Iraq [that is still] loyal to Saddam will kill my wife. They will kill my [child]."

Meanwhile, Mohammad accompanied his friend into Lynch's tightly guarded room. She was covered up to her chin by a white blanket. Her head was bandaged. A wound on the right leg was in bad condition.

"The doctors wanted to cut her leg off," he said "My friend and I decided we would stop it."

Creating numerous diversions, they managed to delay the surgery long enough. "She would have died if they tried it."

Mohammad walked through battles in the city streets for two straight days to get to back to the hospital. His main mission was to watch the guards, but each morning he attempted to keep



Sgt. L.A. Salinas

The Iraqi family that provided vital information in the rescue of POW Army Private First Class Jessica Lynch, rest at Camp Liberty, Iraq, Thursday. The family was welcomed by Marines who greeted them with food, clothing and an American flag.

Lynch's spirits strong with a "good morning" in English.

He said she was brave throughout the ordeal.

When reporting back to the Marines on March 30, he brought five different maps he and his wife made. He was able to point to the exact room the captured soldier was being held in. He also handed over the security layout, reaction plan and times that shift changes occurred.

He had counted 41 bad guys, and determined a helicopter could land on the hospital's roof. It was just the information the Marines needed.

American forces conducted a nighttime raid April 1. Lynch was safely rescued. She has since been transported to a medical facility in Germany.

Mohammad and his family are now

in a secure location and have been granted refugee status. He doesn't feel safe in An Nasryah, but he hopes things will improve as the war against the regime advances.

"Iraq is not a safe place while Saddam Hussein is in power," Mohammad said. "He kills the Iraqi people whenever he wants. I believe the Americans will bring peace and security to the people of Iraq."

Mohammad's wife said she wants to volunteer to help injured or sick American forces in the future.

"America came here to help us," he said. "The Marines are brave men. They have been gentle with the Iraqi people. They are taking out Saddam Hussein. For that, we're grateful."

Mohammad's family hopes to meet Lynch in the future.